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C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 001325

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TAGS: PREL SOCI EPET RS UZ

SUBJECT: RUSSIAN OIL AND GAS UNIVERSITY TO OPEN BRANCH IN
TASHKENT

REF: A. TASHKENT 127
B. 06 TASHKENT 634

Classified By: CDA Brad Hanson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Russian Ambassador Farit Mukhametshin confirmed to the Charge July 12 that the Moscow-based Russian Oil and Gas University plans to open a branch campus in Tashkent later in 2007 (ref A). Mukhametshin said that the decision to open the branch campus was made because Russian oil and gas companies need a larger pool of qualified specialists in Uzbekistan and local technical institutes are not capable of training students to Russian standards. The university branch will accept 100 new students annually for the next four years, and has already received over 1,800 applications for its first freshman class. About 60 percent of the students will be required to pay for their own education, while the remaining 40 percent will be given scholarships funded by Lukoil and Gazprom. (Note: A separate source told us that annual tuition and other fees are estimated to be about \$3,000 per year, versus about \$600 a year at the local institute. End note.) Mukhametshin said that the university will use a Russian program, which is likely to involve at least some study at the main campus in Moscow, but some of the instructors might be hired locally.

¶2. (C) Comment: Opening a branch of the prestigious Russian Oil and Gas University follows last year's opening of a limited branch of Moscow State University (reftels), which has had some problems getting established.

HANSON